1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT? Yao FT?

return to the *lupanda*, where the initiates are welcomed by their friends. An essential part of the ceremony which takes place at this stage is the exhibition of animal shapes made by the *n'mitiwa*, with mounds of earth outlined in flour. These animal shapes differ from lodge to lodge. On the last night before the return to the village the initiates undergo a ceremonial bathing, each boy being carried to the stream by a woman, who thereafter is addressed as 'elder sister'. Finally, with new names, and freshly oiled and decorated, they march to the chief's village to be redeemed by him from the *n'mitiwa* with gifts of cloth. After initiation it is a deadly insult to call a boy by his child-name. All who pass through initiation together consider themselves bound by mutual obligations of hospitality.[1]

Girls' initiation takes place in three stages. First, there is *ciputo*, the general initiation before puberty, which corresponds to the boys' *lupanda*. It takes place at the same time of year, and though it lasts for less than a week, its conclusion is celebrated at *lupanda* jointly with the conclusion of the boys' initiation. A hut is built in the bush, like the long dormitory of the boys, and four days are spent in dancing and singing. Each girl (aged about eight years) is accompanied by a sponsor, a woman friend who continues to be her mentor during subsequent rites, and who assists in giving the girl instruction in her womanly duties. At the end the girls are bathed and anointed, dressed in new clothes, and each is carried to *lupanda* by her sponsor. Here they prove their skill in dancing and receive gifts from their friends. Ritual defloration follows the *ciputo* initiation.[2] Among Mohammedans, clitoridectomy used to be performed by a woman operator, but, it is said, was discontinued in about 1903 on account of the heavy mortality.[3]

After this first general celebration, first pregnancy and first birth are the occasions of separate rites for each girl. According to some informants there were once two ceremonies connected with pregnancy. One, for the young married men whose wives had not yet conceived, used to take place at the same time as *ciputo*; each man was attended by a woman sponsor not his wife, given good advice, and put through various tests of manhood. Mitchell does not confirm the present existence of this ceremony, but in the old days if a man was betrothed or married to a child going through her *ciputo* he had to accompany her.

The *kitime* ceremony takes place when a young married woman quickens with child for the first time.[4] The woman, with her sponsor and the married women of the neighbourhood, went out in procession for a ceremony of singing and dancing and instruction to the young couple, followed by a feast. Nowadays no men are allowed to attend *kitime*. A child born of a woman who had not undergone this rite used to be buried alive; nowadays her *anyawe mbumba* is charged by the chief.

Finally, six days after the first child is born, its naming ceremony forms a last initiation rite for its mother. The husband is formally led into her hut by her sponsor and the married women of the neighbourhood, and the child is taken out for the first time to the accompaniment of feasting and dancing.

Most Yao men and women act as sponsors of initiates at least once, and all parti-

[1] Sources, for boys' initiation: Stannus and Davey, 1913; Werner, 1906, pp. 104-6; Stannus, A, 1910, pp. 247-63; Hodnel, 1913, pp. 12 sq.; Johnston, 1897, p. 409; Weule, 1, 1909, p. 304.
[2] Stannus, A, 1910, p. 259. [3] Ibid., 1, 1910, p. 196.
[4] Ibid., A, 1910, p. 264; Hodnel, 1913, p. 13, calls it *chimoka* (Sulip).

§42. *Pregnancy and childbirth.* An event of the first importance in the Yao world is the first conception or rather the "quickening" with the first child, *Litlwe*; this is described below, together with the other ceremonies of the Chipapo.[1] After the ceremony of *Litlwe*, the period of waiting until the birth of the child passes without further event. A point of medical interest is that native women suffer in many cases from "morning sickness" during pregnancy. That they may have perverted appetites is also recognized, grain husks and ants being among the things most commonly desired. As the Anyanja,[2] the Yao believe that the child develops from the semen of the male, although the growth of the child is in some way connected with the mother.

411 When labor commences, the woman retires to the hut a few hundred yards away from her house, attended by some friend, seldom a midwife, and never by her own people, though the mother and the mother-in-law will probably be near the spot. If labor is not completed by evening, they return to the house and the birth may take place actually within its walls. The attitude assumed in labor is the same as that adopted by the Anyanja,[3] the patient semi-reclining in the arms of another woman who sits behind, grasping her belly. The vulva is smeared with a decoction made from the bark of the *mpwa* tree as a lubricant, but no other help is given. *Kwabuli* is the name given to the place of confinement, a hut near the house where the woman remains for a period after the confinement. The Yao recognize the potentially long [illegible] as the "alligator". "Chisese chitenda nkhol" (The alligator, how it lookout!)." They wait until the placenta is delivered before divining the cord. This is done with the sharp edge of the outer covering of a maize stalk or sugar cane; a knife is never used. The section is made near the placenta or half way between it and the child, after tying the proximal end with a bark string.

The woman who receives the child at birth is the *mbwanga*, friend or godmother. If the infant is born in the bush, she carries it back to the house whither they go as soon as labor is completed. The mother herself, unless she is very ill, goes out shortly afterwards and buries the placenta in the ash-heap, using a stick to dig the hole, never a hoe.

After the birth, the mother and child must remain in the house until the umbilical cord separates, during which time the husband does not enter, though he may come to the door to look in at the child.

The day on which exit from the house is made, the floor is entirely replastered with mud. The baby's head is shaved and a cross is made upon it with *ngoma*, a kind of red pigment. The husband may then receive the child and in the case of a first-born, it is he who gives it the name; other children may be named by the *mbwanga*, the mother, or the maid.

When the mother leaves the house to appear in public, the *mbwanga* who put her there *mwamuka* it.

So long as the infant remains in the house, care must be taken as to persons allowed to handle it. A woman who has recently had a menstrual period or coition with her husband,

[1] Vide infra, p. 574. [2] Rattray, op. cit., p. 248. [3] Ibid. [4] Vide infra, p. 574.

against all evils — witchcraft, attack by lions, etc. The elements then set about building shelters in which the sodi will remain during their term of instruction. According to the number of the sodi as the number of places where shelters are built may vary from one, two or three, to as many as eight. Each of these places is called *Ndapala*. They may be many miles apart and are so placed for the convenience of the mothers in various groups of villages who bring the food daily to the group of boys from those villages.

The boys when they originally left the village were wearing a large bark-cloth covering, with beads and antlers, which latter articles have been taken by the n'witchila and his assistants. At *Ndapala* they wear simply a loin-cloth of bark.

During their stay at *Ndapala*, the sodi are given animal names by the elements who carry on the instruction of the boys until their return to *Lupembe*, the n'witchila having gone back to his village immediately after the circumcision. The names given to the boys are commonly names of beasts of prey such as *Alibale* (*Alibale* = the jackal), *Ambwetwe* (*Ambwetwe* = the leopard), etc.

Certain restrictions as to diet are laid upon the sodi by the n'witchila, e.g. no meat of an animal killed by a beast of prey, no monkeys, chameleons. He will not allow any villagers [illegible] to come who have been through the ceremony. An uncircumcised man is called *ndalala*, one who has not been to his *Unyago*.

Other restrictions as to foodstuffs may be made by the elements, generally in connection with the mythical origin of such food substances. A finger-shaped yam called *Kyota* is taboo, as it is said to have first sprung from the grave of a leper, the leprosy being obvious. After the *Unyago*, the boys have to undergo a special dentistry before they may partake of them. Bananas and rice are absolutely refused them, the latter on account of a story to the effect that rice grew from the genitals of a dead man, the idea doubtless having relation to the resemblance of rice grains to maggots. Fish is denied them by some masters of ceremonies, as it is said to have originated from the diaper of a woman which she threw away while bathing.

Each n'witchila may have special observances of his own. One near Songea caused all manners to be roasted in a certain way. Rows of pieces of manners were placed in split bamboos split and so roasted before the fire in the manner of fish. If roasted in the ordinary way, the manners would split and show the white floury material inside, signified by the verb *ku-lupala*. If this is eaten by the sodi, it is said that the purported wound would reopen.

The length of time spent at *Ndapala* varies from four weeks to as long as three or four months. In the first place they must wait till the circumcision wounds of all are completely healed. Delay may be occasioned by complications having arisen in some cases. Again, permission to return may be withheld by the chief for some reason or other. Should one of the sodi die at *Ndapala*, the body is buried out in the bush and nothing is said to the parents until after the ceremonies are over and all have returned to the village.

881 While the wali thus march solemnly along shaking their wands, the assistants begin singing:

"Ee ndenge ambiwa"
"To the gate they have shut"

[533] 534] to which the wali reply:

"Kwenu kwakupita"
"There is no place where to pass"

The m'wishilo reminds us *Lupanda* till everyone else has left; he then sets fire to the shelters and leaving without looking back, runs to overtake the procession and then leads it on towards the village still at a slow pace, while all around is a yelling crowd of delighted mothers and other relatives and the assistants and drummers, all singing and shouting.

When the outskirts of the village are reached, the m'wishilo halts and waits for the chief to come out and give them permission to enter. The chief brings mikwe which unrolled on the ground measures the length of the procession of wali. Headed now by their leader, the wali walk over this mikwe, while the assistants roll it up behind them for the m'wishilo, as it is part of his payment. Flour may be brought him at the same time, carried by the chief's wives.

At an *Unyago* I witnessed at Kwelimawi's, the halt was called on the brink of a stream at the edge of the village where a bamboo arch had been erected. The arrival of Chief Mahenya at this point with mikwe and flour was the sign for a demonstration by his young men who ran forward as if in battle, firing off blank rounds from old Tower muskets and executing a kind of war dance.

After the mikwe has been handed over, the chief returns to his kraal and the procession continues into the village, across the village open space to the fence round the chief's house. There, the wali enter by a gateway and dispose over the courtyard where they find their sleeping-mats laid out ready for them by their mothers. The m'wishilo lays his "tail" on the leader's mat to bring good luck thereafter. With Mkwaida, there is no further part for the wali, but in some cases they are called upon by the chief to give an exhibition of their dancing and drumming. The wali sleep that night in the kraal and disperse the following day.

In the morning, the m'wishilo takes his "tail" and a stirring stick made from a millet stalk with the roots on it, and strikes the ground at points in a row in front of the chief's house. Here the pots of beer which have been prepared are placed in rows, those chosen by the chief and those chosen by the m'wishilo, and drinking commences. The m'wishilo, before he joins in, takes the wali to an ash-heap in the village and there sprinkles them with medicine from a grain-mortar after which they go with their elsewhere behind a house and change into new cloths. They then go and salute the chief by clapping their hands and depart to their villages, duly initiated and somewhat subdued by what they have been through. Their new names as "men" may be given them by the elsewhere elder at *Lupanda* or after the return to the village.

believe that she will die. The man's representatives are therefore able to establish the child's paternity from the birth-pang confessions of the woman.

The child is kept in the hut where it was born, for six or seven days, while the umbilical cord dries and falls off. During this time (*lusil*) the child is unnamed, and it is named only when it is taken out of the hut. Should it die during this period of seclusion it remains unnamed and is referred to by a special term (*kinyau*, pl. *matyau*). I have therefore been able to enumerate live births by means of the distinction made between *mizaviyagwe* and still-births (*kwesanga*) and children who lived long enough to be referred to as *matyau*. After the birth of the child the woman may not have intercourse for four or five months. To do so would be to endanger the life of the child with a disease called *mkeke*,* which is contracted by a sexually inactive person when he comes into contact with a sexually active person. The husband may have intercourse with a second wife, but must take care to medicate himself so that he does not endanger the life of his child. When the child is about 4 or 5 months of age the parents perform ritual intercourse and medicate the child against the mystical dangers of sexual activity; sexual relations are then resumed.

The Yao say that a second child should not be born while the first is still being suckled. Since lactation continues for about two years I am uncertain whether monogynists remain continent, as they say they do, or whether *coitus interruptus* is practised. It is quite usual for husbands to become labour migrants when their children are still very young. I have known women to write to their husbands who are away working and tell them to return because their children have 'grown', i.e. have been weaned. Labour recruiters had difficulty in recruiting men immediately after the soldiers had been demobilized at the end of the war, because the women objected, saying that they had remained childless long enough and the men must first wait until children were born. However, actual examination of birth-dates shows that children are sometimes born within a year of one another and sometimes there are quite big gaps. The two-year gap between children is probably an ideal which few attain.

5. The Estimation of Fertility

(a) *Sundberg's Age Division*

As a preliminary estimate of fertility, Sundberg's trichotomy of ages may be considered. The argument behind this division of the population into Youth, Middle Age, and Old Age is that those populations with a high proportion of youth have a greater tendency to increase. Table V shows this trichotomy for the Yao with the same material for some other populations shown for comparison. Where the gross reproduction-rate is known for the period shown in the table, this is included.

At any one time a certain proportion of the population is absent from the area, usually at some labour centre. Hence the proportions of the population are distributed abnormally. In all there appeared to be a total of sixty-three men, women, and children absent from the hamlets, who would otherwise have been living there. Hence in Table V these have been included in the totals in the 'Yao with absentees' proportions.

* A disease of this sort is believed to by many Central African tribes. Among the Nyasa-speaking peoples it is known as *simpho*.